

countries continue producing and planting landmines, people—innocent civilians—will continue to get blown up by them. The casualties and fatalities resulting from landmines will not go away until a worldwide prohibition is put into effect. Some countries, including the United States, have been reluctant to endorse a total ban on landmines, claiming that landmines hold an important role in military warfare. Defense Secretary William Perry said in April of 1996 that the use of antipersonnel landmines by American troops facing North Korea have helped to prevent war (g). However, Perry's logic is a bit self-defeating. Every landmine planted in South Korean soil will come up again sometime, at the possible cost of a human life, and despite the cheap production costs of landmines, which can be purchased for as little as three dollars each, they are much more expensive to remove. The cost of removing a single landmine can exceed one thousand dollars (f). Surely, there must be military alternatives to the use of landmines.

Recently, the United States has been making some indications that it is willing to support a total ban on landmines. On January 20, 1997, President Clinton announced that he will be pursuing a total ban on landmines through a United Nations conference rather than through an outside summit or conference. In this way, it is more likely that certain countries, such as China and Russia, that have been reluctant to agree to a worldwide ban on landmines will be more likely to sign a treaty in agreement (g).

As the strongest military power in the world, the full support and leadership of the United States is necessary if a worldwide ban on landmines is to occur. Canada showed such leadership when it hosted the Ottawa Conference in October of 1996, and hopefully, in the future the United States will make similar gestures in an effort to curb the production of landmines (h). If significant progress is made in the next year, it is possible that we may see all legal production of landmines cease before the next millennium.

The United Nations plays a major role in helping to reduce the destructive effects of landmines. Working with individual governments, agencies such as the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the UN Department of Humanitarian affairs have provided healthcare and education to the people at risk from landmines. As more and more are becoming aware of the senselessness of landmines, the United Nations is gaining support in its quest to achieve a ban on the terrible weapon.

Eventually, a ban on landmines will be enacted. However, as history tends to repeat itself, it is important that the nations of the world learn from their mistakes, and one can only hope that when the next cruel, senseless weapon comes around, we will have the wisdom and the courage to stop its carnage before it starts.

THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE ELIMINATION OF LAND MINES

(By Geren, Piltz, Carpenteria, CA)

Globally, it is frightening to think that nuclear land mines are in development. Looking back in history we learn that the land mine, an important weapon of World War II, was an encased explosive charge sometimes laid on the surface of the ground, but usually buried just below the surface. It was triggered by the weight of a passing vehicle or men, by the passage of time, or by remote control. The case is generally circular or square, made of metal or, to combat the magnetic detector, of wood, cardboard, glass or plastics. There are two types of mines: the antitank, to immobilize tanks

and other vehicles, and the antipersonnel, to kill soldiers.

The ancestor of the antitank mine was the artillery shell, buried by the Germans late in World War I to stop British tanks. The antitank mines were developed in Great Britain, the Soviet Union and the United States between 1919 and 1939. They usually contained only five or six pounds of TNT. They could stop a light tank, but had to be used in twos or threes against anything heavier. The true antitank mine, and the first antipersonnel mine, appeared early in World War II. It was an economical way of stopping an enemy or restricting his movements. In 1943 it had become a standard form of warfare. In the Korean War, both the North Korean and the United Nations armies used land mines extensively. In the Vietnam War, the Claymore mine came into general use. Claymores are made of plastic and are small and light. They contain a high-explosive substance and metal pellets that can be aimed in any direction and which have a range of 250 ft. The Claymore can be pushed into the ground or hung from trees, about 36 in. off the ground. A trip wire sets off the charge. Today, a standard U.S. army antitank mine contains between 6 and 12 lbs. of TNT.

The antipersonnel mine is also triggered by weight. They generally contain from 1 to 4 lbs. of explosives and can blow off a man's hand or foot or kill him with flying fragments. They may be a one-stage, simple blast type that explodes in place, or a two-stage fragmentation mine that first fires a container into the air, and then releases a fragmenting explosive charge.

It is time to eradicate all land mines before they do the same to us. Accidents are all too common since a land mine is detonated by disturbing a trip-wire attachment to the mine, or by a delayed-action mechanism. Innocent men and women, whose lives, safety, and freedom we are defending, are being threatened by land mines. And what about the children? Their roads and playing fields are strewn with land mines. Curious, and adventurous, kids wander unknowingly into dangerous situations. Millions of children throughout the world suffer needlessly from lack of food, water and medical care, as billions of dollars are spent on armaments. We take steps to immunize children from diseases, yet we expose them to the possibility of death on their own playgrounds. It has been said that human beings are the softest and weakest targets in war. The innocent always seem to suffer. Our world leaders seem so busy with the vast game of politics that they are forgetting the reason nations and governments exist: to insure the survival of people, to protect their children, to prevent terror. Why gamble with our children and with future generations? Unfortunately, throughout history, nations have sought security by gathering the most powerful weapons available, or so it seems. Land mines do not make us any more secure.

With today's technology, we see a grotesque collection of chemical and biological weapons. Land mines pollute the environment with chemical leakage as well as heavy metals. Recovery is expensive and often not very effective. We need everyone's commitment to eliminate land mines. Everyone is affected by, and can affect, public policies. Serious dialogue can keep alive the basic nerves of our democratic society. As a voice of today's young people, I am actively involved in making our society healthier. If the nerves of a people are dead, then their political vitality is sapped. My own view is, as a conscientious human being, that all warfare is senseless and that young and old alike should look carefully at present strategies for national and world security. We are capable of better protecting our people by

taking global action. I hope to see the day when national security is not measured in military terms. As Americans we have built a dynamic and prosperous society, yet we seem unable to think of, or work for alternatives to war. Conflicts such as war can be solved peacefully. Everyone wants to live. Everyone loves their children. Small steps are important because they can have far-reaching effects. Challenge the experts. Land Mines: we can LIVE without them.

THE COURAGE TO STAND ALONE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California [Ms. PELOSI] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to have this unexpected opportunity at this time of the day to rise and share an occasion with my colleagues. Yesterday, May 13, marked the publication of a book, "The Courage to Stand Alone," by Wei Jingsheng.

For those of our colleagues who are not familiar with Wei Jingsheng, he has been called the Sakarov of China. His book, "The Courage to Stand Alone," is a compilation of some of his previous writings, some earlier from prison and letters that he has written. He is a full-fledged world class champion for democracy. He received, in 1994, the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award. Last year he received the Sakarov award from the European Parliament.

Mr. Wei Jingsheng was sent to jail in 1979 following his peaceful writings about human rights and democratic freedoms. He served nearly 14 years in prison, and then about the time that the Chinese Government was trying to court the Olympics, Mr. Wei Jingsheng was released, only to be re-arrested after the Olympic decision was made.

Mr. Wei Jingsheng was then re-arrested following a meeting that he had with Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights, John Shattuck. At the time the Chinese Government said that Mr. Wei Jingsheng was arrested for revealing state secrets. The state secret he revealed was to tell a foreign journalist something that had already appeared in the Chinese newspapers. In any event, he has gone back to prison for at least another 14-year sentence.

For most of the time that he has been in prison, about 18 years now, he has been in solitary confinement. The only other people around him from time to time are other prisoners whose duty it is for the Chinese regime to taunt Mr. Wei Jingsheng.

Mr. Wei Jingsheng has written the way the Founding Fathers of our country have written about democratic freedoms being written on the hearts of men. He has done this courageously. He continues to be arrested and re-arrested because he will not recant. He has spoken out against the repressive policies of the regime under Deng Xiaoping and continues not to recant even following the death of Deng.

As I have said, he is a great champion of democracy. I hold his courage

up to the attention of my colleagues one day following the publication of his book. As I say, he has been called the Sakarov of China. Many of us in our lifetime will never meet a person who has risked so much for democracy.

It is interesting to me to see leaders of our Government travel to South Africa and visit the prison at Robin Island where Nelson Mandela was incarcerated. It is like visiting a shrine. That is appropriate. Nelson Mandela is a great hero. Why, then, would these same people not even speak out in support of Wei Jingsheng, who right now is suffering the same plight that Nelson Mandela did for so many years?

Remember the name, Wei Jingsheng, the father of democratic freedoms in China, because he had the courage to stand alone.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. PELOSI. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. I would like to associate myself with the gentlewoman's remarks. I have been very concerned about the status of this gentleman. Is the gentlewoman familiar with any efforts on the part of the Clinton administration to intervene on his behalf up until this point?

Ms. PELOSI. It is my understanding that in meetings from the higher levels of the Clinton administration that Mr. Wei's case has been brought to the attention of the Chinese regime. Either the attempts on Mr. Wei's behalf have not been forceful enough or, one thing is for sure, they have not been successful.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. One of the things I am concerned about, if the gentlewoman will yield further, is that while there are many Members in this body such as the gentlewoman, the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. WOLF], and the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SMITH], who are very concerned about this situation, the issue is not really being taken very seriously by the administration. It really is their responsibility, they run the State Department, to bring pressure to bear on the Communist Chinese.

THE AUTOMATIC CONTINUING RESOLUTION

(Mr. FOGLIETTA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FOGLIETTA. Mr. Speaker, people in the Midwest are making the tough and necessary choices to rebuild their own lives. Everything has been taken from them. They very much need our help right now, but they may not get that help.

Why? Because Washington is playing another one of its cynical games. Senator BYRD was just right when he called the CR an automatic pilot.

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It would rescue us from the same public embarrassment they suffered

from last year's Government shut-downs, but it also saves us from having to make the tough choices to balance our budget.

The President has been to North Dakota and knows the need to provide assistance there as soon as possible, but he says that he will veto this bill because of the automatic pilot CR. He is right because it is bad policy, it is a gimmick. It enables us to avoid our constitutional responsibility to make budgets. And if we can lean back on automatic pilot and keep the Government going, how are we ever going to balance the budget?

Let us not play Pennsylvania Ping-Pong. Why do we not invest the time in passing a budget resolution marking up the appropriations bills and getting the job done, not on automatic pilot, but doing the hard work of hard government. That is what we are paid to do.

MFN FOR CHINA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. WELDON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, before I get into my 5 minutes I would like to yield to the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. WOLF], if I may.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for that, and I just wanted to thank the gentlewoman from California [Ms. PELOSI] for speaking out on Mr. Wei and, second, to say that he was arrested after meeting with John Shattuck from the Clinton administration. After the meeting he was arrested, and I guess I would just say to my colleagues in the House this Congress ought to do something about it.

When Sakharov was under house arrest in the 1980's and Scharansky was in Perm Camp 35, we did resolutions, we did everything, and now we are in the 1990's, in a Republican Congress I might say, so I would say to the leadership on our side we should be doing something to demonstrate that we care.

So I thank the gentleman from Florida [Mr. WELDON] for taking this time, and I thank the gentlewoman from California [Ms. PELOSI] for doing it because this Congress, if we do nothing, we are going to be somewhat complicit in what the Chinese government is doing.

So hopefully the Congress will make this a point of reference and we will talk about it until Mr. Wei is released.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman from Florida will yield, I want to thank the gentlewoman from California [Ms. PELOSI] and the gentleman from Florida [Mr. WELDON] for taking this time, and I associate myself with Ms. PELOSI who has been a giant in the leadership on the issue of dealings with China, human rights in China, and in the Far East generally, as someone who has been very involved with my colleague on the Helsinki Commission as we focused on the former Soviet

Union and Sakharov and other heroes of the Helsinki movement, which articulated principles of recognition of human rights in every Nation.

The former Foreign Minister, now the Prime Minister, articulated the fact that the Helsinki final act adopted a premise that it was of concern to all of us how a nation treated its own citizens. Historically, it has been the premise of nations of how they treated the other nation's citizens might be their business, but how they treated their own citizens should not be of their attention.

The fact of the matter is, of course, our world is a better place because nations, and particularly the United States, has taken a focus on how other nations treat their own citizens.

I will be voting against MFN for China, as I have in the past, with some exceptions, when I join the gentlewoman from California [Ms. PELOSI]. But the fact of the matter is we ought to say in the strongest possible terms, as we did to the Soviet Union, "If you treat your citizens badly, you will not be able to deal with us on a business-as-usual basis."

Constructive engagement was not good in South Africa, and I suggest to this administration and previous administrations that constructive engagement, as if we were dealing with nations that adopt our own standards of conduct, should not be the policy of this Government and this Nation.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments of the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. HOYER], and the point I was trying to make with the gentlewoman from California [Ms. PELOSI] is that this is an arena or area where leadership from the White House I think is very essential, and I do not believe we are getting that kind of leadership from the administration. I think the leadership is coming from this body, Members like the gentlewoman from California, like the gentleman from Maryland, the gentleman from Virginia, and there is a vacuum in this cause of human rights, and when we have a high ranking State Department official meeting with somebody and then immediately afterward an arrest occurring and then there is really no outcry coming from the Office of the President, the President of the United States himself, that is a problem, and I think it is incumbent upon us, and particularly people within the President's party, to bring pressure to bear on him to take a more aggressive role in this issue and speaking out on it.

Mr. Speaker, the last Democrat President who occupied the White House, Jimmy Carter, had a very, very strong record on doing this, and he would aggressively move on these issues, and I believe we are not seeing the kind of leadership that we need from the White House on this, and I very much appreciate, needless to say, the comments that the gentlewoman has made because this issue is very disturbing to me when we are having a